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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8740
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA 3778
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 3608

C O N F I D E N T I A L TIRANA 000038

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/RPM:CSHIRTZ AND EUR/SCE:JISMAIL; PRISTINA FOR
KWESTPHAL; USNATO FOR JWORKMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/20/2020
TAGS: [AL](#) [EAIR](#) [KV](#) [MARR](#) [PINS](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: RFG: ALBANIA SEEKS US ASSISTANCE IN NATO FOR
CONTROL OF KOSOVO AIRSPACE

REF: A. 2009 USNATO 583
[1](#)B. 2009 PRISTINA 546

Classified By: A/DCM Michael Scanlon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See para 2.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary and Action Request. On January 19, Albanian Director General for Civil Aviation Ervin Mazniku met with Post to discuss ongoing technical negotiations at NATO over the transfer of Kosovo's airspace to regional actors (ref a). He declared that his government and the Government of Kosovo have signed a memorandum of understanding to seek an agreement giving Albania full responsibility of Kosovo's upper airspace. (Note: the MOU actually only states that a feasibility study of such an arrangement will be conducted. End Note.) To this end, he requested USG support in lobbying other NATO allies to agree to allow the government of Albania complete control over Kosovo's upper airspace. Post requests guidance on USG's position in these negotiations. End Summary and Action Request.

[1](#)3. (C) Concerning ongoing negotiations at NATO, Mazniku stated his understanding that Kosovo opposes Serbian or Macedonian participation in a joint venture to manage Kosovo's upper airspace (although ref b only reports opposition to Serbian participation). He declared that the goal of the recently signed MOU between Kosovo and Albania is to seek an arrangement that gives Albania full responsibility for managing Kosovo's upper airspace. Post has received a copy of the MOU, in which the sides actually only agree to conduct a feasibility study of such an arrangement and in which Albania commits to overcome any deficiencies determined by the study. (Note: Post can provide an electronic copy of the MOU, signed December 21, upon request. End Note.)

[1](#)4. (C) Ma:fQc\$ Q`!aQe\$ th d plhtical negotiations betweenQ
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an arrangement due the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of
Transportation, Director General of Civil Aviation, and the
National Air Traffic Association have developed a oint
report to map out a plan to obtain this capQbility.
According to Lockheed Martin's Project MQnager for Albania
Alberta Allen (LM would likely be the contractor to develop
the capability), it would likely cost the GOA USD 20 million
to develop a primary and secondary radar system in Northern
Albania (in the region of Kukus) that could cover Kosovo's
airspace, while a simple secondary radar would cost USD 5
million. The dual system would also be able to cover the
northern half of Albania, but Albania would continue to be
reliant on Greece for cover of its southern half. Mazniku
expressed no worries in coming up with the necessary
finances, claiming the radars would pay for themselves within

three years through over-flight fees from Kosovo. (NOTE: The GOA is using a similar over-flight fee arrangement to pay for current air traffic control operations. END NOTE) He estimated that 100 percent control would increase the GOA's over-flight revenue by 75 percent. Mazniku did not specify how the respective ministries would share the cost of the radars.

16. (U) Mazniku noted that he will travel to Pristina January 26 to meet with Embassy Pristina and, along with his Kosovar counterparts, try to convince Embassy Pristina to support this way forward.

WITHERS